



Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

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Belgium-Luxembourg

Livestock and Products

Belgian Embargo on Live Hog Imports from the United Kingdom 2000

Approved by:

Philip A. Letarte

U.S. Embassy

Prepared by:

Marie-France Rogge

Report Highlights:

105 Belgian farms are under quarantine for a total of 2,299 hogs.

Includes PSD changes: No

Includes Trade Matrix: No

Unscheduled Report

The Hague [NL1], BE

According to a press release from the Ministry of Agriculture on Friday, August 11, as a result to swine fever detected in the United Kingdom, Belgian Minister of Agriculture Jaak Gabriëls has taken the following measures:

- 1) to forbid imports of live hogs from the United Kingdom;
- 2) to place under quarantine all hog farms in which live hogs from the United Kingdom have been introduced since 6/15/00, until clinic exams and laboratory tests permit to exclude a possible infection.
- 3) to urgently request an extraordinary meeting of the EU Standing Veterinary Committee grouping various Veterinary Chief of Services from EU member states to evaluate the set of measures to take at the EU level.

2,299 live hogs have been imported in Belgium since 6/15/00 . 105 hog farms, most of them located in Flanders, have been placed under quarantine and may therefore not transport hogs for the time being. Even if swine fever is not found, this measure will last at least one month.

The first test results have not indicated swine fever in Belgium. Measures taken have as unique goal to minimize this possibility and preferably to exclude it.

In the farms concerned, strict sanitary measures are being taken. A veterinarian must visit the farm once a week and make a report. Blood samples are being taken in all these farms.

In the 1990's, Belgium was struck by swine fever several times. A total of 2 million hogs were destroyed in 1990-91, 1993-94 and 1997.

After the dioxin crisis last year, this is another blow for Belgian hog breeders.